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26 February 1973

NOTE TO: Dick Lehman, 

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RE:  Paper as of 2/23/73

1. I think, with the  paper as it has been progressively altered, the NIC could now be co-located in the NMCC-NMIC facility with little risk of diminished independence of threat to DCI-USIB control and with an improved access to information and to advisory direction of tactical and operational assets for warning purposes. My reasons follow:

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- The paper provides for the continued existence of a daytime NIC, no longer to be abolished and swallowed up in NMIC.
- The now outmoded and redundant 24-hour NIC watch-standing function is assumed by NMIC; the WONS could continue to be produced by one or two people on the NIC day watch, if desired.
- The NIC will have more instant access to intelligence information it needs via NMIC, such as NSOC and NIOC, and to more, and more timely, operational and tactical data by virtue of closer physical location to the massive intake channels NMCC-NMIC are planning for.
- The Watch Committee explicitly acquires a hitherto implicit "quality control" review authority, independent of the NMCC-NMIC, to use if support to the NIC is found wanting, and no change is proposed in the Watch Committee's structure, i. e., CIA continues to chair and to head up NIC.
- We could avoid departing from the nearly 20-year-old tradition of having NIC in the Pentagon and continue the information channel into the military info systems NIC was originally intended to effect.

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- With planned communications between NIOC and NMCC-NMIC, CIA support to NIC would continue and on an improved, more timely basis. Privileged CIA-Dir NIC contact could still be maintained by grey phone or courier.
- We could avoid the adverse effects of seeming to go along with much of the [redacted] paper, only to grab away the NIC at the last moment--which would be seen as cynical and blatant CIA imperialism and general bad faith. 25X1
- The structure and functions of NIC could be modernized earlier in NMIC rather than waiting for NIOC additional space and construction.
- NIOC could continue to fill out its expanded functions as a general crisis management facility without having to add NIC into its space and planning and with no loss of access to NIC. There has to be a NIOC anyway, if only as a counter-weight to the bulky NMCC-NMIC merger.
- In the last analysis, if NIC were threatened with domination by the military and/or tactical override or with denial of information it legitimately needed, NIC could be moved to NIOC--and with demonstrable cause, in that extreme case.

2. Agreement by DCI-CIA-State to the paper leaves ASD(I) and the NMIC in a position to straighten up the messy, overlapping service and command op center situations, with benefit to NIOC as well as to NMCC-NMIC. NIC can only gain from this, as an additional benefit.

3. This leaves to IRAC and to its Working Group the task of monitoring, advising or helping to plan the interface arrangements between NMCC-NMIC and NIOC, when the latter is finally surfaced. IRAC could also follow ASD(I) and other Pentagon efforts to clean up the op center tangle within the military--on the grounds that its effects and benefits are of importance to national intelligence functions in crisis and warning situations.

4. There remains then only the question of the extent to which ASD(I) should hold executive agent authority in implementing the Henderson paper, as and when approved by IRAC. It still seems reasonable

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and appropriate to seek to confine this "agency" to DOD assets with guidelines clearly and quite detailedly set out by the DCI, via or without IRAC. The ticklish question of "tasking" is more one of semantics than operational fact; in tight situations NIOC and NMIC are both going to be "tasking", pushing assets to their maximum and with good focus and targeting if NIC scenarios and checklists are realistic, current, sophisticated and updated as evidence fills out various stages of anticipated enemy readying moves.



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P.S. DIA's unhappiness with the paper can be seen as an index of the degree to which our objectives have been met.